



**Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services**

P.O. Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570 Phone: 573-751-6400 FAX: 573-751-6010  
RELAY MISSOURI for Hearing and Speech Impaired and Voice dial: 711

**Randall W. Williams, MD, FACOG**  
Director



**Michael L. Parson**  
Governor

August 5, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

The CDC recently provided guidance in relation to the duration of isolation and precautions (provided immediately below):

**Duration of isolation and precautions**

- For most persons with COVID-19 illness, isolation and precautions can generally be discontinued 10 days *after symptom onset*<sup>1</sup> and resolution of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with improvement of other symptoms.
  - A limited number of persons with severe illness may produce replication-competent virus beyond 10 days that may warrant extending duration of isolation and precautions for up to 20 days after symptom onset; consider consultation with infection control experts.
- For persons who never develop symptoms, isolation and other precautions can be discontinued 10 days *after the date of their first positive RT-PCR test for SARS-CoV-2 RNA*.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that some Missouri state agencies such as the Department of Corrections (DOC), and the Department of Mental Health (DMH), and others, may utilize a more conservative approach than the CDC's guidance when handling COVID positives within their facilities and have the support of the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) to do so. For instance, there are differences between long-term care facilities and prisons, which justify a different approach from a clinical perspective.

It is important to keep in mind that the Department of Corrections, for example, operates within a confined setting and house offenders that are or can be at high risk for major illnesses (such as cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD, type 2 diabetes mellitus, asthma, liver disease, hypertension, high blood pressure, and they are also home to a sizable elderly population). Due to challenges such as these, the DOC requires employees who have tested positive to COVID-19 to remain out of work for 14 days and receive one (1) negative test before returning to work. The DOC conducts their own return to work testing. Likewise, offenders who have tested positive will also remain in isolation for 14 days and will require one (1) negative test before exiting the isolation unit. DOC also conducts their own testing for the offender population.

When providing guidance to employees of state agencies, I ask that you keep these challenges in mind and that differences may exist for some employers, especially those who operate congregate care facilities.

Thank you for all of the hard work that you do every day to keep your communities safe.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 919/413-7791.

Randall

[www.health.mo.gov](http://www.health.mo.gov)

**Healthy Missourians for life.**

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services will be the leader in promoting, protecting and partnering for health.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER: Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.